REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 are amended; and formal drawings for Figs. 1-6 are provided with Figs. 5 and 6 now being properly labeled. No new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Nguyen in the February 3 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. The Drawings Satisfy all Formal Requirements

The Office Action objects to the drawings because Figs. 5 and 6 are not labeled. In response, formal drawings are provided with proper figure labels. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

II. The Specification Satisfies all Formal Requirements

The Office Action objects to the specification for referring to Fig. 6. In response, Figs. 5 and 6 are now properly labeled to obviate the objection. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

III. The Claims Satisfy all Formal Requirements

The Office Action objects to claims 1-3 for typographical errors. In response, the claims are amended to correct the typographical errors. Withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

IV. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,493,732 to Aoyama et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,848,430 to Takakura et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the personal interview, Aoyama et al. does not teach, disclose or suggest "document editing means for generating a new permeable layer based on a user entry

of comments among multiple user entries and adding thereof to the document comprising permeable layers displayed on the screen and for generating, when the new permeable layer is added, information of the permeable layers displayed on the screen as layer display state information at the time of adding the new permeable layer; ... wherein the state of the document when the specified permeable layer was added is reproduced," as recited in claim 1. Furthermore, as discussed during the personal interview, the layers are now referred to as "the permeable layers"; and the term "at-add-time" has now been rephrased.

Instead, Aoyama et al. relates to storage of a version information including the version name and creation date for a document or a program source (Abstract).

Takakura et al. does not make up for the deficiencies of Aoyama et al. Instead, Takakura et al. relates to frame within frame for document processor, in which graphic data and character data are each framed and formed on a sheet of documents.

Even if combined, Aoyama et al. and Takakura et al. do not combine to result in the above-recited claim features.
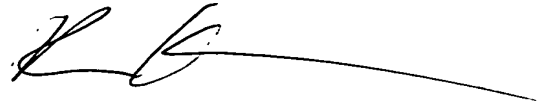
For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is patentable over the applied references. The dependent claims are likewise patentable over the applied references for at least the reasons discussed, as well as for the additional features they recite. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

V.   Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-3 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments:
Replacement Sheets (4)

Date: February 5, 2004

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